

THE MISSIONS OF NEW MEXICO, 1776

A DESCRIPTION BY

FRAY FRANCISCO ATANASIO DOMINGUEZ

WITH OTHER CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTS



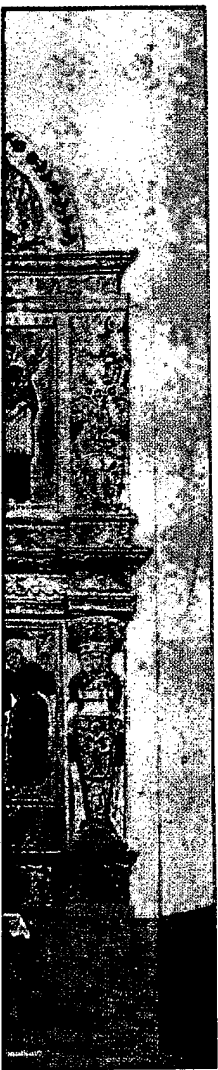
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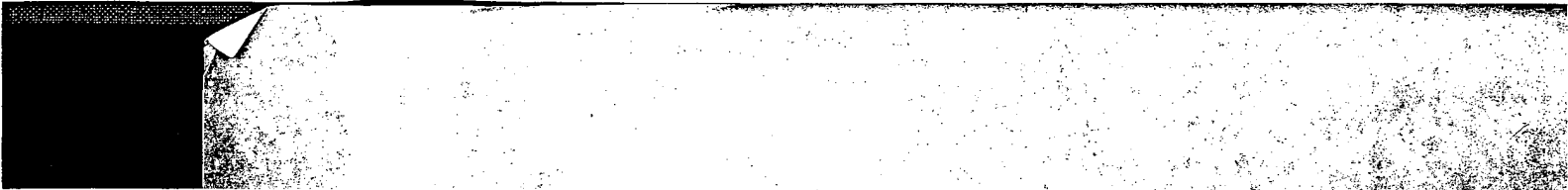
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'T, 1776



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FR

Very Reverend Pa-
instruct me on this
that my gratitude and
his new and conspicu-
ous as the profound
have the honor to be
Paternality.

most unworthy subject,
Atanasio Domínguez
(rubric)

May 1, 1795.
Minister Provincial
de Cruzealegui.

seventh of the same

76.

and his return has
dissatisfaction, because
sent away from Zuñi
in, for it is the best
and the only disad-
vantage leagues from the
for one who lacks a
at present because
alone on account
I desire a com-
as possible. In my
le is Father Oyar-
that he is seeking
perhaps changed his
encourage it, for
service to God,

because in accordance with his character
and other circumstances he is very suited to
joining me in said mission.

In the month of June I entered Moqui,
where I remained for a week, well attended
by those wretched infidels, obstinate in
their foolish libertinism, especially those
who govern, who impede with terrible
threats the conversion of their inferiors and
subjects because they fear (*et non temere*)
that they will be abused and almost enslaved
by the Spaniards if they submit. A falsehood
in which the demon succeeds in holding
them by some sadly undeniable truths. I
pointed out to them the good for which
they were created and the eternal evil to
which their infidelity is leading them, but
for my great sins I achieved only the sorrow
of leaving them in their obstinacy, although
I did succeed in my intentions in other
matters.

The first pueblo of Moqui is a little more
than 46 leagues to the west of Zuñi. Today
the province of Moqui has seven pueblos in
an area of somewhat less than 5 leagues. The
last pueblo to the west (which is called
Oraybe) is the largest one there is in these
regions. It is arranged like a chessboard,
with well made and open streets in all direc-
tions. It has eleven rather long blocks two
stories high, not counting more new build-
ings that are being added to it. In this
pueblo alone there must be nearly four
thousand souls. The Moquinos have many
flocks of sheep; they harvest maize in the
greatest abundance; they also gather cotton,
etc. They are governed in quite a civilized
fashion, and most of them are affable and
well-inclined. They have all they need, and
therefore they harm no one if they are not
first given provocation. This suffices for
your Paternity to have some information
about said province and to commend to God

1. AGM, Historia, vol. 52, exp. 14. We include
this letter to clarify the letters of May 21 and July
29, 1776, which follow, as well as Vélez de Esca-
lante's reasoning about the route to Monterey and
the possibility of reaching there.

the repair of such lamentable perdition.

One of the principal motives for my ex-
pedition to Moqui was to find out every-
thing possible with regard to the communi-
cations those at Monterey seek with those of
New Mexico. Therefore it was my intention
to go on to Cosnina if the information
should promise any favorable discovery, but
since it was not as I had thought, I did not
put this into effect. When I reached the first
pueblo of Moqui, a Cosnina was there. After
seeing me he promptly left to notify his
rancheria, and its captain decided to come
to see me with his people. When they were
already near Oraybe, the Moquinos made
them go back, saying that I had already left
Moqui. Therefore they returned, and the
captain sent one to see whether he might
overtake me, as he did, for I had not left
Moqui. I discussed the matter with him, and
the account that he gave to me was the
following:

The land where the Cosninas dwell is six
days of bad road west of Oraybe, although
there are already some rancherías of them
three days away. Beyond the last rancherías
(about nine days' travel from Oraybe) there
is a very high sierra which stretches more
than 100 leagues from northeast to south-
west, tending toward the west, at the north
skirt of which the Río Grande (de los Mister-
ios) runs west, impassable by the Cosninas
and those bordering on them. The Cosninas
do not know what people there are on the
other side of the river, nor even whether
there are any, since they never cross it nor
have they seen signs of them.

On this side, near the sierra, nine days'
journey west of this Cosnina, there is a na-
tion which speaks the same language and is
called Jomascabas. Fourteen days from
these are others whom they call Chirumas.
They are warriors, thieves, and savages, be-
cause they eat the human flesh of those they
kill in their campaigns. The Cosninas have
learned from these Chirimas [sic] that there
are Spaniards in that direction, although at
a distance, because the said Chirumas go